

Developments

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CUBA:

Casting Shootdown as Bilateral Issue

At a news conference yesterday, National Assembly President Alarcon accused the US of failing to prevent repeated violations of Cuban airspace by exiles. Alarcon asserted that US involvement in search-and-rescue operations in Cuban territorial waters means Washington agrees the incidents had taken place there.

— He said Brothers to the Rescue—which has dropped anti-Castro leaflets over Havana—was not the humanitarian group portrayed in the US.

The Foreign Ministry yesterday rejected US accounts of the shootdown, describing Secretary Christopher as “a cynical liar.” The Ministry said the attention given the issue in the US was largely a function of presidential politics.

Havana has made few comments about new US sanctions. Alarcon termed the measures “more of the same” but said reciprocity applies in terms of restrictions on the movement of diplomats.

— *Curbs on US personnel in Havana could complicate monitoring of Cubans repatriated under bilateral agreements.*

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